

State Senator

EDITH PRAGUE

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE 2009

Protecting Families, Seniors, Small Businesses and Our Communities

The budget battle dominated the headlines at the Capitol for much of the year. Finally we were able to pass a budget that closes the deficit while protecting many programs and services that Connecticut families feel are important.

Libraries will receive the support they need to provide ongoing services for our local communities. LIFE STAR will be adequately funded and continue its lifesaving mission. School-based health centers will continue to address medical, mental and oral health needs of students in grades pre-K through 12.

We cut spending by more than \$3 billion and preserved small business programs that will help grow jobs in the future. I will continue working to help stabilize Connecticut's economy. Jobs, jobs, jobs are what we need. Please contact my office if you have any questions about our new budget.



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MY PRIORITY: Protecting Families, Seniors, Small Businesses and Our Communities

The Fight for a Fair Budget

In September, the General Assembly and Governor Rell agreed on a budget for the next two years. The compromise budget includes more than \$3 billion in spending cuts—the largest reduction in state history. We did it by cutting costs in every agency and all parts of government.

At the same time, we were able to protect middle-class families, the elderly, children and the poor from devastating cuts to critical services. Thanks to Democrats' efforts, the LIFE STAR medical helicopter will continue to operate and save lives. College students will have access to financial aid to help with the cost of tuition. Adult day care centers will be able to continue to operate. Job growth will get the attention it needs and businesses will get help with the cost of health care.

Democrats also made the tax code more fair by raising revenues from joint filers making more than \$1 million a year and single filers making more than \$500,000 a year.

The budget isn't perfect but it will help stabilize Connecticut's economy and help families survive this difficult time.

Small Businesses: The Backbone of Connecticut's Economy

This past legislative session we took important steps to help protect small businesses and their workers from the recession.

A recession is the wrong time to eliminate state support for small businesses. That's why we opposed efforts to shut down business incubators, economic assistance grants and supply-chain initiatives—all of which help businesses boost productivity and grow jobs.

Small business need our support, which is why I voted in favor of legislation that will help keep an eye on regulations that might impact our small businesses. The law which is effective as of October 1st requires any state agency proposing a regulation to identify how it affects small businesses and submit that analysis to the General Assembly.

Finally, by passing the SUSTINET bill we are on our way to making affordable health care available to small businesses, including the self-employed. Once fully implemented SUSTINET is expected to save individuals and businesses in Connecticut \$1.7 billion.